

CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM  
RELEASE IN FULL 1995

24 November 1962

The Honorable Dean Rusk  
The Secretary of State  
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Attached is a study of intelligence targets in Cuba which require periodic photographic coverage. This paper was prepared by the USIB Committee on Overhead Reconnaissance and was reviewed and approved by USIB members on 21 November.

Mr. McCone wanted you to have a copy. Copies are being sent also to the Secretary of Defense, Mr. McGeorge Bundy, and the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Faithfully yours,

(S)

Marshall S. Carter  
Lieutenant General, USA  
Acting Director

Attachment:

USIB-D-41.5/39 (COMOR-D-24/31)(TS-155879)  
w/Tabs A, B, and C

Drafted by E. Knoche, EA/DCI

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SIB-D-41.5/39  
COMOR-D-24/31

19 November 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR: United States Intelligence Board  
SUBJECT: A Program for Photographic Reconnaissance  
of Cuba

1. In response to directions from the Chairman of the Board, the Committee on Overhead Reconnaissance has reviewed the requirements for photographic reconnaissance of Cuba. The result of that review is set forth in the attached.

2. The COMOR recommends that the Board approve this study and forward it to appropriate authorities for implementation.

3. This paper is scheduled for the Agenda for the Board meeting on 21 November 1962.



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Executive Secretary  
United States Intelligence Board

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COMOR-D-24/31

A Program for Photographic Reconnaissance of Cuba

1. With the dismantling of the MRBM/IRBM sites in Cuba and the removal of most of the missile equipment from Cuba, the intelligence needs of the community can no longer be expressed in terms of "offensive weapons" alone. During the course of the past week this change in intelligence needs has been reflected in modifications of the emphasis given various aspects of our reconnaissance program. It is therefore appropriate at this time to review the present program of reconnaissance, to determine the immediate and continuing intelligence needs, and to determine the reconnaissance program appropriate to their satisfaction.

2. The current intelligence requirements susceptible of satisfaction by reconnaissance are continuous knowledge of the deployment and operational status of significant weapons systems already known to be in Cuba, and detection of any new weapons systems as they are brought in to Cuban ports and deployed throughout the island. This information is required to provide our policy makers with a continuous picture of the Soviet/Cuban posture, and to provide our planners with the detailed information they need to plan for and, if necessary, conduct operations in Cuba.

3. Expressed in terms of reconnaissance collection means, we can divide the requirement into four categories:

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a. Periodic surveillance of known installations

b. Periodic and special reconnaissance

of Soviet shipping

c. Special coverage of specific, selected objectives

d. General search.

4. Surveillance. There are several weapons systems known to exist in Cuba which require regular and frequent coverage to maintain a current estimate of their capabilities, and the extent of Soviet plans to use them. These include primarily the IL-28 bomber forces, the MIG-15, 17, 19 and 21 jet fighters and fighter bombers, the suspect Soviet Army infantry and armored installations and vehicle parks, the coastal cruise missiles and the KOMAR PGMGs. These installations and weapons demand frequent cover at the present time, although changes in the situation may modify the frequency required. There are other weapons systems and military installations which require surveillance, although not so frequent as those systems just mentioned. In this category can be placed the SA-2 sites, the secondary naval forces, the exclusively Cuban army encampments, the secondary airfields. Finally the status of Cuban/Soviet defenses in the vicinity of certain specific areas, such as Drop Zones and Landing Beaches, must be ascertained at regular

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intervals. All of these requirements can only be satisfied in the main by overhead reconnaissance. In large measure, the SAC U-2 program, BRASS KNOB, can provide the bulk of the cover, supplemented at intervals, particularly in the case of ground force equipment, by a program like the CINCLANT tactical program, BLUE MOON. Specific objectives, with proposed frequencies and type cover recommended are listed in TAB A.

5. Shipping Reconnaissance. There remains in Cuba, at Mariel and Casilda, equipment associated with the MRBM/IRBM sites. It will be necessary to continue reconnaissance of these ports until this equipment has been removed. There are also ships enroute to Cuba at the present time, as well as ships already in Cuban waters, which are known to have participated in the arms lift earlier this year. In order to determine expeditiously what new military equipment is being brought into Cuba, it will be necessary to maintain relatively frequent surveillance of the primary ports with on call high resolution reconnaissance to identify the types of equipment in each case. Much of the general information will be available from other sources, especially CJNCLANT's Fleet Air Reconnaissance program. However, the greater part of our knowledge will require overhead reconnaissance of the ports, while the ships are in, with

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both high and low altitude aircraft. See TAB B for specific objectives.

6. Special Coverage. From time to time intelligence will be received, from a variety of sources, which will indicate the presence of various military installations and weapons. In order for policy makers to act upon this intelligence, confirmation will be desirable. This confirmation can best be provided by overhead photographic reconnaissance. The existence of reported installations can generally be confirmed, and their location precisely determined, by high altitude U-2 photography. In some cases this will also be sufficient to ascertain the nature of the installation. In other cases, however, only low level, high resolution cover can provide the photo quality necessary to an accurate determination of function. There will also be installations detected by high altitude search cover which will require low level confirmation and identification. In view of the extensive use of cover and concealment by the Soviets, this low level coverage will need to be frequent. In addition there may be need for photographic evidence of military installations which policy makers can use in the various forums where they deal. All of these needs will require overhead reconnaissance, using both high and low level aircraft, of selected installations on a one-time cover basis. Some

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examples of objectives in this category, which are awaiting verification at the time of this writing, will be found in TAB C.

7. Search. The nature of our intelligence activities in regard to Cuba is such that new installations could be built undetected or new equipment brought in and deployed without our knowledge. To protect against this potentiality, there is a need for frequent search cover of the entire island to detect new installations (including any suspect nuclear storage sites) and new deployments of weapons. There will also be a need for determining, by aerial search of relatively large areas, the exact location of weapons or installations reported to be present. Under current conditions, BRASS KNOB on a periodic basis appears to offer the most potential for accomplishing such a task.

8. Conclusions. Our current program of reconnaissance using a mix of high and low level photo reconnaissance is essentially what we must continue for the foreseeable future if we are to satisfy our outstanding intelligence requirements.

9. Recommendation. It is recommended that the program\* be approved as defined in the attachments here to TABs A, B, and C. The tabs will be updated on a continuing basis.

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[Redacted]  
James Q. Reber  
Chairman  
Committee on Overhead Reconnaissance

\* This would include using night photo capabilities such as the Navy A3D directed against prime objectives such as ports and other specific objectives which are suspect or where there is evidence of significant change.

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[Redacted] COMOR requests that it be kept advised of the availability, readiness and performance capabilities of such special recce capabilities in order that it may adjust its requirements accordingly.

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Tab APeriodic Surveillance Objectives

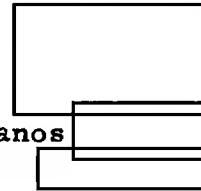
<u>Objectives:</u>	<u>COMOR Number</u>	<u>Frequency Desired</u>
		High                    Low
		Altitude              Altitude
		Daily                Weekly/On-Call
A. <u>Airfields</u>		

Daily high altitude coverage of airfields listed is required to determine:

1. Location, type, and number of aircraft,
2. Unusual concentration or dispersal of A/C,
3. Suspected aircraft crates or large containers located at airfields,
4. Operational status of airfield.

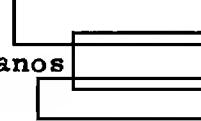
Weekly and on-call low altitude photographic coverage of the listed airfields is required to provide large-scale photography for technical data on configuration of aircraft, weapons on the aircraft (i.e., A/A missiles), operational capability of the aircraft as well as to determine what is located in revetments and/or under nets. Additional coverage would be required as specific targets develop from either the high or low photography.

San Julian A/F



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Holguin A/F



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Camilo Cienfuegos

San Antonio de losBanos

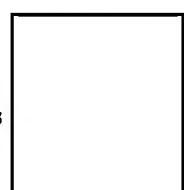
Camaguey A/F

B.     Major Military Encampments

Daily     Semi-weekly/On-Call

Although daily high-altitude coverage will detect a major change, low-level coverage is needed on a semi-weekly basis if we are to maintain current our estimates of Soviet ground force equipment and personnel, or to make a determination of the capabilities, groupings, and possible missions of these forces.

Artemisa



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Remedios

Santiago de las Vegas

Holguin

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 Tab A(cont.)

<u>Objectives</u>	<u>COMOR Number</u>	<u>Frequency Desired</u>	
		<u>High Altitude</u>	<u>Low Altitude</u>

C. <u>Cruise Missile Sites</u>		Weekly	On-Call
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Cruise missile sites will require high altitude coverage on the order of once a week in order to detect any changes to the sites. Any indications of change will require immediate low-level coverage. ~~as it is possible to substitute longer range missiles with a potential against the United States, for the present type.~~

Siguanea  
 Banes  
 Santa Cruz del Norte  
 La Sierra  
 Campo Florida  
 Guerra



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D. <u>KOMAR PGMG</u>		Weekly	Weekly/On-Call
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The KOMAR PGMGs are located at Mariel and Banes Naval Bases. Weekly high-altitude photography will depict the presence or absence of the PGMGs. Due to the support base construction which is in progress at these bases it is necessary to supplement the high-altitude photography with weekly low-altitude photography so as to gain the necessary and available information from the large scale photography. From the low-altitude missions one is able to ascertain more completely whether the KOMORs are operational or not.

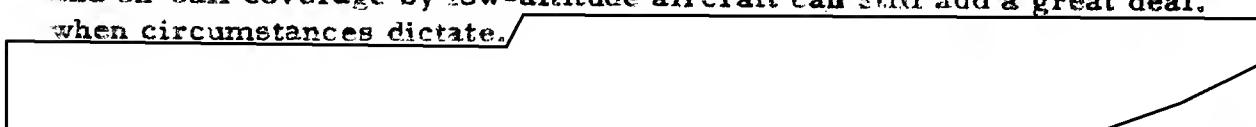
Mariel Naval Base  
 Banes Naval Base



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E. <u>SA-2 Sites</u>		On-Call	On-Call
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Based on experience to date, we consider that on-call high-altitude coverage will be adequate to keep track of any changes in the general SA-2 picture. Low-altitude photography has provided some good technical detail and on-call coverage by low-altitude aircraft can still add a great deal. when circumstances dictate.



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Tab A (cont.)

F. Beaches, Drop Zones

Twice Weekly On-Call

CINCLANT contingency plans require accurate up-to-date information on the condition of landing beaches and drop and landing zones, if they are to be kept current. In addition to the condition of the objectives themselves, access routes, obstacles, and the location of enemy anti-aircraft weapons and counter landing forces must be determined in detail if operations are to be enabled to proceed with minimum casualties, and maximum opportunity of success. Twice-weekly high-altitude reconnaissance must be supplemented by low-level coverage on call in order to provide the required detail concerning ground forces materiel, disposition, and the nature and extent of obstacles.

G. Guantanamo Base Area

Twice Weekly On-Call

To maintain an updated ground order of battle, i.e., concentration of personnel and equipment, it is necessary to cover the Guantanamo area twice weekly by high-altitude photography. Due to the small scale of this photography it will at times be necessary to launch low level aircraft to provide large-scale photography, so as to ascertain the true functions and capabilities of specific areas which indicate intent to attack or signs of extreme buildup.

H. Secondary Airfields

Weekly On-Call

Weekly high-altitude coverage of secondary airfields is required to determine:

1. Operational status of the airfield
2. Unusual concentrations or dispersal of A/C,
3. Location, type, and number of A/C,
4. Suspected A/C crates or large containers located at airfields.

Low-altitude coverage required as specific items are identified and large-scale photography is required for detailed technical information.

I. Secondary Military Ground Forces Weekly

Encampments and Vehicle/Equipment Parks

On-Call

Current contingency plans and national estimates require detailed knowledge of ground order of battle and the state of readiness of the

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Tab A (cont.)

ground forces in Cuba. Inventories of arms, artillery, vehicles, and heavy equipment, the state of readiness, organization, disposition, and the preparation of positions and field fortifications occupied or to be occupied, all contribute to this knowledge. Weekly high-altitude surveillance, supplemented by low-level reconnaissance of questionable targets deemed sufficiently critical can, when subjected to detailed photo interpretation, contribute in a major way to the satisfaction of this requirement.

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Tab B

Shipping Surveillance

A. It is imperative that daily surveillance by means of high altitude aircraft be obtained of certain key ports in Cuba. This requirement is necessary in order to first ascertain which ships are in port and whether they have any potential for loading or unloading military cargo. Once this information is obtained by photographic means (or any other available means) low level coverage will be necessary in order to ascertain the exact nature of the cargo being off loaded. Equally important will be the determination of what military equipment is being loaded for shipment out.

Havana  
Mariel  
Santiago de Cuba  
La Isabela  
Casilda  
Matanzas  
Cardenas  
Cienfuegos  
Punta Gerardo  
Caibarien

B. Secondary ports requiring weekly high altitude surveillance:

Bahia Honda  
Nuevitas  
Punta Alegre  
La Coloma  
Nueva Gerona  
Moa Bay  
Cabanias

C. Addition of secondary or other ports to any days lists should be made a matter of decision based upon information that ships are enroute or expected.

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Tab C

Sample Special Objectives requiring One-Time Cover:

Las Villas Province Search Area - CIA requirement of  
search of area in Las Villas Province for new installations.

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Baracoa Port - Low level cover required to evaluate nature  
of shipping observed in port by high altitude cover, and to ascertain  
the nature of the cargo being offloaded.

Santiago de Cuba - Low level cover of an installation detected  
by high altitude photography. Cover needed to identify function of  
installation with possible military association.

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21--DDI TCO  
22--OCI TCO  
23--OSI TCO  
24--OSI TCO  
25--ORR TCO  
26--DDP TCO  
27--DDR  
28--AD/OSA  
29--Intel/OSA  
30--SO/OSA  
31-45--DCI for USIB/S  
46-60--C/SRS/DDR

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21 November 1962

The Honorable Dean Rusk  
The Secretary of State  
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Dean:

Attached is a study of intelligence targets in Cuba which require periodic photographic coverage. This paper was prepared by the USIB Committee on Overhead Reconnaissance and was reviewed and approved by USIB members today.

I have sent copies of this to Mac Bundy, and Bob McNamara.

Sincerely,

signed per

John A. McCone  
Director

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[redacted] say Mr. Knobell  
for the record never signed 11/24/62  
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Walters TS 155879

(EXEMPTIVE REQUEST FILE)